1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

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of a little bit of wood, and when the bird puts its beak into the bait, it is caught round the neck by the string. On the borders of the lake of Rikatla, boys used to catch even big birds with these traps. They set many kinds of snares. One is a cage made of sticks of palm marrows which shuts automatically when a bird enters and eats the grain by which it has been attracted. They sometimes build two walls of sticks planted in the soil and converging to the same point, where they reach a little door provided with the trap. Hares are sometimes caught in this way. They follow the wall, and when they go through the door, they tread on a hurdle which is connected with a bent rod : the rod springs back and the hare is caught.

4) Learning the science of the bush.

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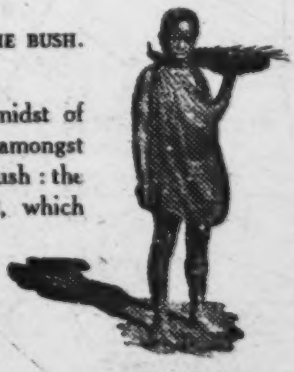
This life in the velt, always in the midst of Nature, develops the power of observation amongst the boys. They know everything in the bush : the big Psyche caterpillar (Eumeta cervina), which hangs from the nembe-nembe shrub (Cassia petersiana) like a little bundle of sticks, and which they call *mahambanindlwane*, "the one who walks with his house;" the big Carabid beetle which appears with the first rain, the Anthia alveolata, marked with large hollows on the elytra and which is therefore named "the son of the smallpox." Indeed I found in Rikatla a boy who knew that a certain white cocoon found on the branches of the nkanye tree (Sclerocarya caffra) gives birth to the splendid green Queen Moth (Argema Mimosae).



Phot. G. Liengme.
A Thonga boy.

[262] Having collected beetles and butterflies extensively for years, I have had an opportunity of recognizing the power of observation of these boys, who were my best hunters! Of course they particularly appreciate things edible... especially the *shitambela*, a big Buprestа beetle which they roast and suck.

In their country there

524 are big nasty yellow-brown hornets (a kind of Belonogaster)
136 which build more or less circular nests, sometimes attaining to the size of a man's head. On a certain day the boys decide to make war on these enemies. They make shields with the leaves of the *nala* palm tree which they plait together.

524 They cut down branches, which they wave to protect themselves, and one of them goes and strikes a heavy blow on the wasps' nest! The irritated insects rush out on their assailants and sting them. The boys try to kill the wasps with their sticks or to crush them when they light on them. Sometimes, overcome by the pain, they run away; sometimes, resisting to the last, they kill and exterminate their winged enemies.

Besides this there are also *big battles between the shepherds* of the different flocks. The shepherds amuse themselves by taking one another's cattle. Those who are the strongest bring the stolen herd triumphantly back to the neighbourhood of their village, but they would never let it enter the kraal. The vanquished call to their help their elder brothers, who come to recover their property and, if they can, give the thieves a sound thrashing!

578 Insults and fights are frequent between the clans. The boys
962 of Mpfumu call out to those of Matjolo: " Forest gadders! Eaters
991 of snails and boas, of lizards and tortoises " (all of which are questionable food!) (In Ronga: Balala! Badi ba tihumba ni tinhlaru ni makhwahle ni tinfutchu). Those of Matjolo answer them: " Crowd of women that you are, clad in cotton material! " (Babasati! Matchimbamphela!), in reference to the fact that the inhabitants of Mpfumu, living near the town, some time ago replaced the belt of skins worn by the savages by a piece of cotton tied to the waist and hanging down to the knee (ladula).

855 The custom of frightening children with imaginary beasts is
857 wide spread amongst the Thongas. The bogey man is called
538 *Shingomu-Ngomu* or else *Shikunkununu*, and by this very expressive
761 word they designate a huge and mighty being who walks, swaying his big body from right to left, with a sound like *ngomu-ngomu*. The ogre is *Shitukulumukumba*, a word coming originally from the Zulus, which corresponds to the Ronga *Ñwambilutimhokora*, that is to say: " the one who has scales on the heart. " He eats

857 the stick and gives it to the girl! Or if the mother says : "I found
324 the baby in the banana grove," the father will cut a banana stem,
864 take the heart of the bulb and beat it so as to separate the fibres, which will then represent the hair of the baby ; the girl will then play with it for a time.

Girls, like boys, have also special games.

524 First the *ntshengu -ntshengu*. A big girl takes the part of the mother and all the little ones hide behind her. She stretches out her arms to protect them against another girl, who is the thief and tries to take the children away. Notwithstanding the mother's efforts, all are taken one by one, and the stealing is done whilst they sing :

Alack ! Mother ! Protect us, protect us !

The mother answers :

All my children are taken, all will soon be taken,
All will soon be taken, there, behind me.

(Yo ! Mamana ! ntshengu-ntshengu ! ba bela hi shiruba .

The capture being effected, all the children sit down in a row and cross their legs. To their right and left they dig small holes which represent wells or pots. The mother passes. She stretches out their legs and they allow her do this. Then she pretends to drink water from their pitchers and says: "My child, where did you find this water ?" The child says : "Oh! I have drawn it over there, at the spring, under the banana trees, in the cool shade." Then comes the girl who plays the part of the thief. She tries to stretch out their legs. But the children refuse ; they stiffen themselves. She tastes their water and enquires where they brought it from. "I drew it in a nasty hole full of frogs, mud and dirt." They add all the different remarks they can think of.

524 As the boys sing to the transport oxen when a wagon comes
136 along the road, so the girls address a kind of *incantation to a big*
333 *grey lizard* called *galagala*, which can turn its head blue at will. The lizard is found lying on a branch, warming itself in the rays

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524 of the sun. One girl approaches it, and claps her hands under its nose, singing in a monotonous tone :

Gala-gala, hana-hana nhloko !
Big lizard, lift up, lift up your head !

It seems that the lizard is so fascinated by the song that he stretches his neck and swings his head to and fro during the whole time that the girl claps her hands.

524 To the *crabs*, which are very numerous in the slime on the 136 sea-shore, and have only one claw, coloured green, violet or enamel 226 blue, they sing :

Ba ka mphembemuiwe, tlakula silawuto !
Come along, you animals with only one claw ! Lift it up and bring it down again.

The little girls who go hunting crabs as a condiment for their food assured me that, on hearing this song, the crustaceans do come out of their holes, and that the harvest is then a large one.

When an *owl*, mistaking the time, comes out of her hiding place at noon, she is received with applause, and they sing to her :

Shikotana, gwlela fole !
Owl ! flap your wings ! You will find tobacco !

524 Another girls' game, which is wide-spread, and in which the young Thongas acquire great proficiency is called : *ku tha buhlolo*. They take a string tied at both ends so as to form a large ring, and make all kinds of complicated figures by twisting it with their fingers and even with their lips. I have made a drawing of some of them. Girls compete together and try to surpass each other in inventing new figures. They teach each other this *buhlolo*.

Another old game, which is found under various forms in a great number of countries, is the *mathakisana*, knuckle bones. Girls gather stones of the nkanye fruit (tinfula), dig a hole, and put them into it. One of them takes a kind of ball (shigungu), perhaps a small sala fruit or any other fruit. She throws it in the air and, in the meantime, takes out of the hole four or five stones and puts them back, leaving only one outside. This stone is then

is favourable to the growth of certain plants. But by the side of 134
the sand *(pfunye)* and the hillocks *(shitshunga)*, here and there, is 137
found a sort of black earth, containing a large proportion of vegetable detritus, in which maize, sweet potatoes, sugar cane, etc. thrive splendidly. *Nyaka* is the name given to this black soil : it is found at the foot of the hills which run from Lourenco Marques in the direction of Morakwen, and extends for a distance of some fourteen to eighteen miles. Several small springs rise at the bottom of this gentle slope, and tend to form a curious marsh, covered with beautiful tropical growths, of which gigantic palms *(mimale)* are the most striking. These are found in forests [136] ●
covering hundreds of acres, with an impenetrable undergrowth of ferns, enormous rushes and evergreen shrubs : magnificent palm groves, where apes, wild boars and large storks find a safe retreat.

Between this marsh of primitive mud and the hills extends 133
the arable tract of nyaka. There the fields are lovely ; maize can 134
be grown all the year round. In other places the nyaka is parched and dry, as in the valley of the Lower Nkomati, from the point where it leaves the Lebombo hills to the elbow of Magule. Here the annual overflow of the river deposits on the low-lying plains a fertilising slime, as is the case in Egypt. It is strange to see, during the winter, tufts of grass which were carried down by the stream, months before, caught in the branches of the trees and suspended some 15 to 20 feet above the ground!

The sand of the coast belt is replaced in the hinterland of Matjolo, in the low level between the Nkomati and the Bila plain, etc. by another kind of soil called *hundjusi*. This is a reddish earth containing much sand, but much finer and more fertile than the sand proper.

On leaving the coast belt we reach the Lebombo and Longwe hills, which are composed of a hard reddish porphyraceous stone. Further West, a broad plain extends from the Lebombo to the Drakensberg Mountains, in some places consisting of a greyish or brownish clay, in other regions very dry and stony. The foot

and plural of Cl. 11. When a noun begins with *shi*, it belongs to Cl. shi-pi, with *li* to Cl. li-ma, with *du* to the Class bo-mo. As a rule nouns will be given in their singular form.

231 Native goats are very small and frequently attacked by a disease called ndlwabane which decimates whole herds. They are not tended with sufficient care, although a special hut (mhala) is sometimes built to protect them from the rain.

Goats are killed by piercing the heart : this is at any rate the ritual way of killing them (I. p. 158). The officiating person stands on the right of the animal and stabs it in the left side, holding the left leg. The animal suffers acutely ; goats are however often slaughtered by cutting the throat, not from any feelings of compassion, but in order to prevent them crying too long, as "this would surely bring many people on the spot and you would have to share the meat with them!" (Mboza.)

231 782 If the ox plays an important part in *social life*, the goat seems to be specially reserved for sacrifices, that is to say for *religious usages*. This ritual use entitles us to suppose that, as millet seems to be the oldest cereal, the goat is the most ancient domestic animal amongst the Thongas, and, no doubt, amongst all South African Bantus.

The gall bladder, the astragalus, the half digested grass found in its intestines, strips made of its skin, all play a special part in the ceremonies and superstitious practices of the tribe previously mentioned. The gall bladder (nyongwa) is fixed in the hair of the person in whose honour the goat was slaughtered. The astragalus (nhlolo) is fastened to the wrist, the ankle or the waist as a means of protection. The *psanyi* (half digested grass) is taken from the shihlakahla stomach, and is used in connection with the invocation of the gods in the sacrifices. (See Part VI, Compare also I. p. 111, 160-162.)

136 231 643 782 *Sheep*, hamba, yin-tin, (Ro.) nyimpfu, yin-tin, (Dj.) are scarce in our tribe, and are mostly without wool. The wool sheep is called *shitlapu*. It is not taboo for subjects to possess sheep, but this animal is connected in a special manner with the chiefs. Its astragalus designates royal personages in the set of divinatory bones. It is used in the national sacrifices, those offered to the chief's ancestors at the capital. (See Part VI.) Let us remind the reader that its skin is used to carry a child in case of *bovumba* (I. p. 194).

The *pig*, as previously mentioned, is a new comer in the Bantu village. Its name, *nguluve*, means the wild pig. Most villages, however, possess one or two. They are never slaughtered in connection with sacrifices. 231

Poultry (tihuku) is the most common of all live stock. Not a village is without its fowl house (shihahlu) ; these are generally fashioned like a small hut and perched on piles to protect the poultry during the night from snakes. (See illustration I. p. 312.) 235 343

When a hen and her brood of young chickens have to be cared for, a much smaller hut is built on the ground, but the utmost precaution is taken to keep it almost hermetically sealed, as the mhamba (a long green snake, very venomous) and the shipyahla (Echnida arietans, a large viper resembling the puff-adder) do great execution amongst fowls! As cows are not bred for milking purposes, neither are chickens raised for the sake of their eggs. In fact Thongas consider it a sheer waste to eat eggs and always allow the hens to hatch them out. Hens are wilder than they are with us and often make their nests in the open country, returning some fine day with a flourishing young family. The breed is of very small size and the eggs are tiny : it would require at least two to equal the weight of one ordinary egg such as are for sale in the European markets ; it is therefore evidently more advantageous to hatch eggs than to eat them! If, by any chance, a hen dies on the nest from the bite of a snake, the Natives will willingly devour the half hatched or three quarters addled eggs ; the more developed the chicken, the greater their appreciation of the delicacy, for, says the Thonga, "i nyama!" — "this is meat!" Fowls are extensively used as timhamba, viz., sacrificial offerings. The throat is cut ; a little of the down plucked off the neck is dipped into the blood, and brought close to the mouth for the performance of the ku rite, one of the smaller feathers of the wing (shihluwa), one of the claws, and the beak are tied together and fastened to the wrist, ankle or neck of the person for the sake of whom the offering has been made. (Part VI.) [136] 235 262 235 782

Thongas assert that they have always possessed fowls. "They 235

mistic and social rites connected with hunting constitute an elaborate system which forms a most interesting study. 224

The interest of this study has been further enhanced by the discoveries made in the caves of France and Spain regarding our forefathers of the paleolithic age. They also were great hunters, and the rites of the Bantus, who are to-day in a state of civilisation very similar to that of the Mousterian and Magdalenian periods, are capable of throwing much light on tne customs of primitive humanity. The cave-dwellers of those remote times used to depict wild animals on the walls of their caves and on some of these artistically drawn figures may be noticed characteristic spots; these would seem to represent the wounds which the hunters intended to inflict on the animals in the course of their next hunting expeditions. This was probably a magical method of achieving success in the chase. Bantus of the present day do not possess this wonderful pictorial art. Their magic is different, but it rests on the same principles, and who can say whether the description of their hunting rites may not help us to understand some of the discoveries already made or still to be made in the deposits of prehistoric times, just as the position given by them to the corpse in the grave explains why in the Mousterian skeletons the legs and forearms are bent towards the sternum.

I. *Big Game Hunting.*

Big game is plentiful in Thonga territory, more so of course in the remote places (mananga) than in the populated areas. Elephants are still found in the desert, in Hlengweland and Maputju; hippopotami swarm in the Nkomati and Limpopo; antelopes of subtropical Africa still abound north of Khosen and in the low plains of Zoutpansberg: the sable antelope, (mhalamhala), water buck (mhetlwa), koedoe, gnu (hongonyi), reed buck (nhlangu), etc. The duiker (mhunti) is met with everywhere. The smaller antelopes are the shipeya, mangulwe, etc. The giraffe (nhutlwa) and the buffalo (nyari) are still found north of Khosen, but are decreasing in number. 136 224

224 they come to him," For this reason hunters strongly assert that should
775 he neglect to perform the rite he will have no success in his future
783 hunting expeditions. A third aim, at least in the case of hippopotamus-
825 hunting, is to overcome the charms of the wizards who ride upon them.

When studying these old hunting rites I had the impression of living for some hours in close contact with primitive humanity, at a time when man, owing to the elementary character of the weapons at his disposal, was almost on the same level as the wild beast and was obliged to display an enormous amount of courage, skill and endurance in order to assert his domination over the animal world and to make it serve his purposes. Since the discovery of gun powder and modern weapons a new era has set in for the hunter. Did not old Viguet assert that now, when an elephant is killed by means of a gun, the nuru is no longer to be feared? Hunting has become for the Bantu of to-day an amusing sport, more profitable indeed but by no means so interesting!

II. *Psinyama-nyamana. The flesh of small animals.*

136 This word which comes from the well-known Bantu word
262 nyama, meat, is a triple diminutive, obtained by the reduplication of the stem, the prefix *psi*, and the suffix *ana*. It means all kinds of food derived from animals of small size, of which the Thongas are very fond.

Anything in any way resembling meat is welcome to them. Amongst Mammalia they specially enjoy certain kinds of rodents, not the domestic rats, but field mice called maphephe and mabuti which boys catch in their traps. Civet cats (nsimba, yi-tin) and wild cats (goya, dji-ma) are not frequently seen near the villages.

136 As regards birds, they eat them all with the few exceptions
222 which I shall shortly mention, from the tiniest sparrow to ducks
262 and Guinea fowls, which they manage to snare. They have no aversion to the lower types of animal : they collect the *matomane*, large caterpillars belonging to a species of Saturnidae called Cirina similis (Dist), which are found in families on the nkanye tree, during October. By the exercise of a gentle pressure on the hideous creatures, the inside is squeezed out, and the rest is thrown

into a saucepan and boiled, resulting in an indescribable broth of a blackish colour. To see it is quite sufficient... and they enjoy it! Several other kinds of Saturnidae also figure at their feasts : the matomane of nyamari (Bunaea Caffraria), others of a brick red colour (Melanocera Menippe), those of the nhlangula shrub (Gonimbrasia Zambezina), etc. When the cooks go out to split the trunks of old half decayed nkanye trees, from which they get their kindling wood, they are most careful to put on one side the big white larvae of two large Cerambycidae coleoptera (Mallodon Downesii and Plocoederus frenatus, etc.). These enormous white worms (shipungu) will be fried in their own fat, and served up as a tit-bit for the ladies on their return to the village.

The insect world does great injury to the gardens through the agency of its winged members, the *locusts*, and Natives avenge themselves by eating them wholesale. When a swarm of these destructive creatures has alighted somewhere in the evening, and is benumbed by the cool air of the night, the villagers go and collect them in bags or baskets in great quantities. The heads, wings and legs are torn off and the bodies roasted on the embers, or boiled and used as seasoning. When plentiful, the locusts are dried and crushed in mortars to make a much appreciated flour. To our taste, locusts are simply nauseating.

Another favourite dish, the secret of which the Nkunas learnt from their Pedi neighbours, is provided by *the winged imagos of white ants*. At Christmas time, these insects emerge by thousands from the ant-hills of that region. Some are of small size ; the boys introduce grasses, smeared with glue, into the holes from which they come and catch a large number of them by this kind of fishing. They eat the head, which can be heard cracking between their teeth, and throw the bodies into a calabash to season the evening meal. But there is a larger kind which is even more appreciated. The body is whitish, as large as an almond. A hole in the ant-hill, three feet wide by two feet deep, is dug at the spot where the insects are most likely to emerge. An old pot is placed in the clay of the ant-hill at the bottom of this hole. The hole itself is covered with green branches. These curious winged termites, as soon as they have emerged from their retreat,

136 try to fly; but they soon fall to the ground and you see them
222 running towards each other and shedding their slender transparent
262 wings, so that they remain on the spot, like worms, creeping slowly along, unable to defend themselves, an easy prey for the birds and the *shinana* toads, which have a grand feast on the happy day when winged termites appear! Those which happen to emerge where the hole has been dug, try to escape by flying, but are prevented from doing so by the covering of leaves. They at once fall heavily to the bottom and roll into the pot, which may become quite full in a few hours. The owner of the trap then comes and makes a splendid sauce with its contents! This kind of termite is not met with on the Coast.

I cannot enter into details as to all these more or less questionable foods. (See I, p. 65, the mention of the Shitambela beetle.)

262 Although the caterpillars, coleoptera, larvae, and locusts are universally appreciated, there are other "meats" which appeal to certain individuals or clans, but are disdainfully eschewed by others. For instance the boa is eaten with great gusto by the Rongas and disliked by the Nkunas. The same is true of the big varan lizard. The tortoise is generally eaten, but the Mpfumu boys, who esteem themselves more civilised, reject it. On inquiring why some persons or clans exclude certain kinds of meats which other persons or clans consider delectable, we find that there are two different reasons for this, between which it is important to differentiate. The exclusion is due either to a *nyenya*, viz., disgust, or to a *yila*, viz., a taboo.

1) Owing to *disgust*, some people refuse to eat *pork*: "their hearts fear it," probably because pigs are modern and some people are not yet accustomed to eat their flesh. Zulus reject every
262 kind of fish (nhlampfi) from the same feeling of disgust. Snails
777 are despised by all the Thongas; it is true that the snail of the
825 country (Natica Wesseliana) is not very tempting, its shell being of a transparent green and its flesh reddish; moreover it is said to "singita," viz., to bring bad luck to any one meeting with it on the way.

262 But the flesh of some other animals is abstained from, even
825 dreaded, because they *yila*, they are taboo. Thongas have no

rite may explain why sexual relations are prohibited during all important hunting and fishing operations. With their magic conception of Nature, Bantus do not separate the domain of man from the animal world ; human actions have their immediate effect amongst animals. So if men and women keep strict control over themselves, hippopotami, fish or elephants will not be so wild, and hunters will have more success!

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Meat is either boiled (pseka), or roasted (wosha). When boiled, the broth is called *muru*, (Ro.) or *shashebo*, (Dj.) the same name that is given to monkey nut sauce or any other seasoning. When roasted, it is either placed on the embers, or skewered on sticks (lihanga) and exposed to the heat of the fire.

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The blood of animals (bubendje) is also eaten by most men. However, many fear it (tshaba), not on account of a yila, as if it were taboo, but rather from individual loathing. There are no special laws to be observed as regards bones. The meat of sacrifices, offered in the funeral rites, must be eaten *on the road*, not in the mortuary nor in the guests' villages, as we have already seen.

262

Meat is welcome, and eagerly sought after in time of famine (ndlala). Should the October rains fail, or the crops be destroyed by grasshoppers, as has been, alas, frequently the case since the first appearance of these pests in August 1894 (1), the Natives are bereft of every resource (2). They dig up all the edges of the

262 731 [36]

(1) Just at the commencement of the war between the Natives and the Portuguese, grasshoppers arrived in thick clouds in the district of Lourenço Marques. They had not been seen for a great number of years ; old folk only recollected having seen them in bygone times. Since then the scourge has never entirely disappeared. The coincidence of their coming and the beginning of hostilities struck the Blacks very forcibly ; they often said, at the sight of the grasshoppers : "They announce the armies of Gungunyana."

(2) Here is a pretty couplet with reference to famine :

Nkondjo wa nhlengana shipopokwana ?

— Lembe ra ndlala a ha nguma kumbe !

The traces of the little antelope (nhlengana) (which one sees in the desert a long way from its lair) recall the year of famine, when one does not stay near home ; (one must go a long way to search for food). See also the several allusions to the year of famine in *Les Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga*, p. 158, 160 et seq.

"You see! Stones also grow!" Another Native geologist, who had heard the European story of creation, coming from the Coast, a country of sand and sand only, and visiting the Drakensberg Mountains near Shiluvane, was amazed by the enormous cliffs of the Mamotswiri and gave vent to the following reflection : "No wonder we have no stones in our sandy land. When God created the earth, he used them all to build these mountains!" 823

Fossils are rare in Thongaland, where sand covers almost the whole country. There is however in the southern part of the Maputju region an outcrop of cretaceous rock which belongs to the Gault and which contains ammonites, Nautillus etc. Natives call them *nsongo stones* and are very much afraid of them. They say that "these stones with ribs" can walk. They bring bad luck (singita). Should a child pick up one of these fossils and bring it into the village, he will fall ill ; he must therefore undergo a special treatment. 136 823 777

Crystal greatly pleases the Natives. It is rare in South Africa. When magicians can secure a white or a black crystal they generally wear it round their necks together with the claws, or teeth, of wild animals, or with their little skin bags which they use as amulets. For this reason I once had the good fortune to be able to exchange a crystal I had brought from Switzerland for one of these charms! 135 301

The *earth* (misaba) is also a great and important thing. First because it is identified with the people dwelling on it, with the clan. *Tiko*, the land, means both the soil and the people. Further than this, the earth is the chief (I. p. 382) ; hence many laws : e. g. the tusk of the elephant which fell on the earth when the beast was killed, belongs to the chief, etc. (p. 57). The most solemn oath is that which is taken with earth (ku funga u hahla hi misaba). Should a man be accused of stealing or of being a wizard, if he puts a little earth in his mouth, says *tsu*, and declares : "I do not know anything about it," those who care for his safety will look for a medicine-man to treat him : it is a *mondjo* (a magical method of divination. See Chapter III). The same thing is done when an oath has been taken by sucking a piece of iron. 823 695 787

A curious superstition regarding the earth is this : after moving from one country to another, you should for some days mix with 823

When travelling through the country, you may come across 824
a tree round which a rag has been tied, evidently for some religious 769
purpose. One's first idea would be that this tree is worshipped, 778
but this is by no means the case. The tree is probably that which the divinatory bones have singled out as the one around which the village should be built, and the offering of this rag is made to the spirits of the ancestors, exactly as is done when the rag is placed near the grave, or at the door of the little hut built on it, in the case of those possessed. (See I. p. 141 and later on Chapter III). The tree is only sacred on account of this association. I have sometimes called the *Nkanye* a sacred tree, and the Thongas call it the king of trees, but it is not so in itself, or in virtue of any Nature spirit dwelling in it ; anybody can cut it without transgressing a taboo ; it is venerated because it provides the tribe with the national beer, and because its branches are used as pillows for the dead and its twigs as *mhamba* in the funeral service (I. p. 138). The religious and social *luma*, to which the bukanyi is subject (I. p. 397), is observed from fear of the ancestral spirits and not because the tree itself is in any way worshipped. In fact I never met with any worship offered to a plant as such.

VI. *The Animal World.*

Plants, *psimili or psa-ku-mila*, things which grow (ku-mila), 815
are distinguished from animals, called *psibandjana* or *psihari*, 136
which are said to *kula*, become great, and not *mila*. 825

The knowledge possessed by the Thongas with regard to animals is extensive. They give names to all the larger ones, especially, of course, to those which are eaten, but also to some which are smaller, insignificant and useless.

The *Annelida* are called by the generic name of *tinyokana*, diminutive of *nyoka* (yin-tin), snake ; leeches, *ntjundju* (mumi) ; lumbrics, *nshikwa* (yin-tin), both those living in the earth and parasites in the intestines of children.

Amongst *Myriapoda* the Julideae are called *Khongoloti* (dji-ma) ; the Millepedes, *Ndlandlalati* (yin-tin). When one of these has stung a Native, you will see him swallow a little earth, and a

815 mouthful of water after it, to prevent swelling. "The milleped
136 will die at once and you will not suffer much, because you have
825 been wiser than it (u yi rangelile butlharin)."

The same precaution is taken with regard to Scorpions, *shiphame* (Dj.), *mubalane* (Ro.). Other Arachnida are Spiders (*pume* (dji-ma) *ripe* (dji-ma), Ticks *(shikalana)*, and the Itch *(shinwayana)*, which Thongas know but too well without being aware that it is caused by a microscopic animal. To this group probably belongs the *maroda*, a parasite met with in the huts of Bilen and other remote parts of the country, whose bite causes actual disease.

The *insect world*, so richly represented in Tropical countries (1) is pretty well known, though many of its representatives are of no practical use to the Natives.

Orthoptera. Acridius peregrinus, the locust which ravages the fields, is called *humbi* (yin-tin) in Ronga and *ndjiya* (yin-tin) in Djonga. (See p. 81). The first "clouds" which appeared greatly impressed the Natives when they were seen at the beginning of the war of 1894. I heard some one say that this phenomenon had been foretold by a "mulungwana," a little man fallen from heaven to announce this calamity which threatened the land. (See next Chapter). Other Acridians are called *mhera* (yin-tin); the larvae of locusts, which abound at certain times in the gardens, are the *hondje* (yin-tin). The Pamphygus, a fat, heavy, grey locust, the female apterous, are called *phuphu* (dji-ma). The Grillus is *Shiyendlwa* (shi- psi), and is eaten by some. But the best known Orthoptera are those of the Mantidae family whose representatives are numerous in the country. They are called *Ñwambyevu* (Dj.) or *Ñwambyevulane* (Ro.), viz., the one which cuts the hair, probably on account of its claws, which move like
825 scissors. This insect plays a great part in the superstitions of the
769 Bushmen, who worship it. Amongst the Thongas there is a similar custom; young shepherds, when they meet with a Mantis,

(1) See my publications on the Entomology of Delagoa Bay; I. *Coleoptera*, in collaboration with Dr. Bugnion; II *Orthoptera*, by Dr. A. von Schulthess Rechberg; III *Hemiptera* by Prof. Montandon in the "Bulletin de la Société vaudoise des Sciences Naturelles." XXV, p. 132-220; IV), *Lepidoptera*, "Bulletin de la Société Neuchâteloise des Sciences Naturelles" Tome XXVII, p. 177-250.

tear out a little hair from the skins of their belt and offer it to the insect saying : "Take, Grandfather!" They say that in old times they were looked on as gods (psikwembu), or rather emissaries of the ancestor-gods, just like the little green snakes (Chapter II) ; their name was Mahulwahulwane, and when one of them entered a hut, no one interfered with it, as it was thought that perhaps some god had come to pay a visit to his descendants. These ideas regarding Mantidae seem to be now disappearing and the offering made to them is merely a little children's game. Another Orthoptera is the *Shipfalapfapfa*, an onomatopoeia, describing a flying locust, and the *Shishirikoko*, a large species which emits saliva through its thorax. When it flies the Thongas say to it : "Go to the place where people eat meat!"

Hemiptera. Bugs are well, too well, known in Thongaland, having taken up their abode in most of the huts, where they are tolerated. They are called *Nsiketi* (yin-tin) and the wild bugs *Nsiketi ya nhoba*, bug of the bush. Lice, *Nhwala* (yin-tin), are regarded as vermin, and often as the result of bewitchment, especially when seen swarming on children. Many Aphidae (grubs) cause an exudation on certain shrubs, a kind of wax, the *Mubodi*, which is used for the manufacture of the black crowns (I, p. 130) ; others are called *Shibungubungu*, the red ones, probably a kind of cochineal.

Neuroptera. *Diptera*. The equivalent of these names of flies is *Nhongana* (yin-tin). Mosquitoes are called *Busuna* and fleas *Butseka*, with the prefix *bu* which here means a collection, a great number. *Busokoti*, a similar word, designates ants. The big gad-flies are the *Bawa* (dji-ma). The Libellulidae are called *Mungutane* (mu-ba) and the Termitideae *Muhlwa* (mu-mi).

Lepidoptera. Butterflies and moths are designated by a single word, *Phaphalati* (Dj. Notice the feminine suffix), or *Phaphatane* (Ro.) (dji-ma), and their caterpillars by the term *Hukwa* (yin-tin) or *Tomane* (dji-ma), this last word especially applying to the large Saturnidae caterpillars which are eaten by the Natives (p. 80). The relation between the caterpillar and the butterfly is not generally known ; only once did I find a boy who knew that a certain white cocoon, used as an ornament in dances (p. 102) gave

136 815 birth to the big green moth with long tails, the Queen Moth. The reason why butterflies, though plentiful in Thongaland, have so little attracted the attention of Natives is, no doubt, the fact that they do not in any way contribute to their food. I have told the story of a woman who tried to force a child to eat a butterfly. (I. p. 445.)

136 825 777 *Coleoptera.* The general term for Coleoptera is *Shifufununu*, and it especially applies to the big Tenebrionidae (Psammodes Bertoloni), called *shifufununu sha paripari* (p. 68) and to the large black Carabidae of the Anthia genus which abound on the roads in spring ; one of them, marked with small depressions on the elytra is, for that reason, called the small-pox shifufununu (sha nyedzane). Travelling once with a grown-up Thonga we saw a black Carabida which had four white spots on the back. It was the charming Eccoptoptera mutilloides. I saw him trace a circle round it in the sand saying : "To-day I shall eat to my heart's content !" — "Namunhla ndji ta shura !" — "What are you doing ?" I said. — "Oh ! This is the *Shurwa-shurwane*," he answered. "When you meet it it is a sign that you will have plenty to eat !" He was mistaken ! The real shurwa-shurwane is the Mutilla, a kind of apterous wasp, which has also four white spots on its back, and the beetle we met was so similar to it that he mistook it for a Mutilla ; is it not called mutilloides, pseudo-mutilla ? (1)

136 [753] 825 262 — The Copridæ are called *Gadlen* (dji-ma) and these strange dung-eaters, which are extremely abundant in the country, are thought to be under the command of the wizards who can introduce them into your body to kill you. The pretty Cerambycidæ, with their long horns, are the *Ñwahomurikotjo*, the ox of Rikotcho, or, according to a truer etymology, the ox with horns bent backwards (kotjeka). Children sing an incantation before them, clapping their hands (I, p. 68). Their big white larvae, the *Shipungwana*, dig channels in the stems of nkanye, nkuhlu, mphesa, etc., and are readily eaten as well as the *Shimhukuta*, the

(1) This custom reminds one of the action of Swiss children when they send the ladybird to heaven, to ask God to give them fine weather to-morrow, or of their saying that crushing a golden Carabus on the road will cause rain to fall. Certain Coleoptera are of good omen everywhere ! Only, if in Europe they foretell fine weather, in Africa they announce a good meal. The difference is significant !

136 825 262 larva of a large Calandra which swarms in the stems of the palm trees of the marsh (p. 4). The *Shitambela*, a big Buprestida (Sternocera Orissa) is roasted by the shepherds and eaten after they have torn off its elytra.

136 755 *Hymenoptera*. *Wasps* are called *Mupfi* or *Mupfu* (mu-mi), and are divided into four different classes: the *Mupfu* proper (Belonogaster), the *Tlatlanhongana*, the *Bamaandlopfu*, a grey species, and the *Mumpfundlopfu*, a large black species which burrows in the soil. When someone has been stung by a wasp, the others laugh at him. If he resents being made fun of, they say to him: "Be not angry; we do this to help you." They are really trying to divert his attention from the pain in order to 136 comfort him. *Bees* are called *Nyoshi* (yin-tin) and are greatly 262 appreciated for their honey (p. 44). Natives know the males 815 (*djongwe*, dji-ma) the larvae *(shipungwa)*, which they eat with as much pleasure as the honey itself. They call the honeycombs *hahla* (dji-ma) or *shihlenga*, the wax *mumpfu* (mu-mi) and the 136 pollen brought by the bees, *nsindjo*. The curious *Mbonga* (yin-tin) 825 *Bee* is worth special mention, owing to the superstitions which are current regarding it, and the part it plays in certain rites (I. p. 390). This species, which does not sting, digs a narrow passage of two or three feet deep in the soil and excavates a hole of one or two feet broad where it builds its round nest. Natives say that nobody knows what the mbonga does with the earth which it digs out of the cavity in which it makes its nest. No heap of earth is ever seen in the vicinity. The hole is continued under the nest and has no end. It probably extends to subterranean pools where the insects go to drink, — as it is said that no one has ever seen a mbonga drinking from the lake or the well, as the other bees do. Moreover the entrance to a mbonga nest is invisible to the majority of people. It is only certain families who can see it and consequently dig out the precious honey (1). For all these reasons the mbonga is

777 (1) The Libombo family was one of those "which the mbonga loves" (randja). Elias who belongs to it told me that he once paid a visit to one of his neighbours who had just cleaned his village; he discovered a mbonga hole and said to his friend: "There is a mbonga nest in your village." But the man was unable to find it. Elias then dug as deep as his shoulders and found the nest all surrounded by "calabashes" full of honey. He says that when rain falls the little bees cover the entrance of

136 825 surrounded with a certain mystery, and this is no doubt why its honey is used in the manufacture of the *nyokwekulu*. Its scientific name is Trigona togoensis, var. Junodi (Friese).

136 262 454 787 Amongst the *Mollusca*, a great many are eaten : the *Mbatsana* (yin-tin) of the sea (bivalve shells), *Likatla* (li-tin) of the lakes, and the *Hwaru* (yi-tin), oysters of the Tembe shore. The land snails are called *Humba* (yi-tin) ; the big ones (Achatina Lamarkiana) are used as safes for the deposit of pounds sterling and are often buried in the huts ; hence the expression *Humba ya bupfundji*, shell of riches! The smaller ones, resembling our snails (Aerope caffra), are rarer and it is considered a bad omen to meet with them on the road. — "Where you go you will hear cries of mourning!" Their name is *Shikumbukwane*. The slugs are called *Holokompfa* (yin-tin) and the smaller snails, *Shihumbanyana*, diminutive of *humba*.

136 825 262 *Fish* all have names, but having never dwelt in the close vicinity of the sea, I have not learnt them. I know the *Mfungwe* (yi-tin). the fish whose mouth ends in a saw, the *Mangapfi* (dji-ma), the name of a kind of hawk given to the flying fish of Delagoa Bay, the *Nhempfane* (yi-tin) found in the fresh water ponds, the *Ntima* (yi-tin) the barbel, the black fish which must not be eaten by lovers before their marriage (I, p. 107).

136 *Amphibia*. *Ntlambya* (mu-mi) is the ordinary frog (Rana oxyrhynca) whose young are known and called *Shilungula* ; another black species is the *Rebya* (dji-ma) ; the tree-frogs are called *Shilungwalungwana* (Rappia marmorata and argus) ; the toad *Kele* (dji-ma), Bufo regularis ; the famous Breviceps mossambicus is *Shinana* (I. p. 87) the great warrior of the tales (p. 221).

136 825 *Reptilia*. There are many kinds of *Lizards*. The common kind found in the houses, under the verandas is the *Mponondjo* (mu-mi) (Mabuia striata), ; the Lygodactylus capensis, found on the hills, is the *Nkolombya* (mu-mi) ; the little Agama

777 the hole with their wings to prevent water from inundating the nest. When it lasts too long they quickly go down to close the entrance of the nest ; the water then leaks down the pipe which descends into the interior of the earth. He added : "If a man does not belong to a family which "knows" the mbonga and if he happens to find a nest he will meet with misfortune ; one of his relatives will die. The bees will bring him ill-luck (singita)."

aculeata, which runs on the sand, *Shipyindji* or *Shihonokamahlo*, the one which gazes at you ; the large gheko, Agama atricollis, with a head of which the grey colour can change into blue, *Galagala* or *Phululu* (dji-ma) (I. p. 173) the grey one, which hides itself in dark places, in hollow stems or under roofs is the *Hoko-kwana* (dji-ma) (Hemidactylus grenatus) ; it is said that when this lizard sucks at the breast of a human being, it is impossible to remove it, and the only means of getting rid of it is to go and suckle a dog!

But the most curious lizard of these countries, that which most strikes the Native imagination is the Chameleon (Chameleon Petersii), *Lampfana* (dji-ma). Herd boys throw ground tobacco into its mouth to avenge themselves for the bad turn it did mankind when it lingered on the road and came too late to bring the message of eternal life (as we shall learn in a moment). It is used by certain magicians to discover thieves. They smear a chameleon with a drug which makes it turn white and then let it go : "Then the thief, wherever he may be, also turns white, and if he does not confess his theft, he dies!"

The flesh of none of these lizards is eaten, but that of the big Varan which lives near the rivers, *Kwahle* (dji-ma), is considered a delicacy. The kwahle is said to be very hard to kill. About *Crocodiles* (*ngwenya*, yin-tin) all sorts of stories are told. When one of them has been killed, the contents of its stomach are carefully preserved ; Thongas assert that each year, when the rains begin, crocodiles swallow a stone, so that their age can be known by counting them. These stones are taboo ; for a subject to swallow them is a cause of death, but one of them is chosen, treated with certain drugs and swallowed by the chief to warn him of his death, as we have already seen (I, p. 393). Crocodile stones play an important part in divination. (See Part VI. Ch. III. D).

Tortoises, whose generic name is *Mfutju* (yin-tin), are eaten and also used in the divinatory art, as we shall see. Some lake tortoises are called *Gamba* (dji-ma) and sea tortoises *Hasi* (dji-ma).

Snakes (nyoka, yin-tin) are generally dreaded and considered dangerous, although many kinds are quite harmless. The

825 *Shipyahla* (Ro.), *Mhiri* (yin-tin, Dj.) is the big, lazy, grey puff adder,
136 which creeps along the ground, and is one of the most venomous kinds, together with the *Mhamba* (yin-tin), a slender species, very swift and often found on trees. "When you meet a mhiri," say the Nkunas, "throw a little earth on it and you will soon see
[752] its brother!" Of course magicians have plenty of drugs to cure snake bites. For this purpose they use the head of the adder roasted and pulverised. *Shibatlankombe*, (Naja nigricollis), "the one which carves a spoon" is the name of a species which
[262] curves its neck till it looks like a spoon. The *Hhlaru* (yin-tin) is the boa. It is eaten. Another member of the Clapidae family is the *Likure*, a pretty greyish violet species (Causus Lichtensteinii).
[769] Amongst the harmless snakes are those little blue ones, *Shihundje* (Dendrophis subcarinatus), which are considered as emissaries of the ancestor spirits. I shall mention them again later on. The *Nsoma* (yin-tin), very common and harmless, is probably Dispholidus typus. Some small ones, not larger than worms, but hard and shining like metal, are called *Tumbi-tumbi*, because they hide (tumba) in the sand. One of them seems to be Xenocalamus bicolor.

825 There are also the legendary snakes of the Thongas. On the
777 Coast they speak of the *Buwumati*, which dwells in the lakes and is invisible. It is only heard crying "bu-wu-bu-wu" when rain is falling, and its voice is as loud as that of an antelope. If it shows itself to a traveller, it is a very bad sign. The story is told of a man who came back from consulting a bone-thrower. He saw the buwumati lying on the ground, its coils extending to a great distance, closing all the passages. He retraced his steps, but after three days he died. In the Transvaal, this dreadful snake is called *Shimhemhemhe*, the name being an imitation of its cry.
825 This superstition is perhaps of Pedi origin, but it has been accepted by the Nkunas. The shimhemhemhe dwells in certain dark woody ravines on the slopes of the Drakensberg mountains. If anyone imprudently penetrates there, the snake pursues him, creeping along the branches above, and bites him on the top of the head. A man met with it once on the way to Thabina; he saw it on the road, its head raised, a shining head of two colours. There

was no end to its body. He tried to avoid it by making a long circuit ; he reached home, but died because he had seen the snake which it is death to see! 825

Birds (Tinyanyana, yin-tin). As I have made no regular collection of birds, I cannot here give the scientific names corresponding to the vernacular ones. These are very numerous, and they are not always the same in the different clans. Here is the list which I made by questioning the pupils of my school who came from all parts of Thongaland : (1) 136

Palmipeda. *Sekwa* (dji-ma) duck. *Sekwanyari*, *Sekwamhala*, *Shikukubi*, (Mal. Kho.). *Ñwafamben* (Mal. Nku.). *Shihlakahlekha*, *Lingubi* (Mal.). *Shiyankaken*, *Tutwana*, (Mpf. Bil.). *Ngululwana* (yin-tin), (Mpf.).

Long-legged birds. (Tinyanyana ta psikokoko). *Kukolwe* (Mpf. Bil. Mal.). *Munyangana*, *Ñwantjangantjangana* (mu-ba) (Mpf.). *Makhondjwawa*, *Gumba* (dji-ma), *Mayiwabembe*, *Tshebane* (Mal.). *Mugalandlopfu* (Mpf. Mal.) ; *Tshembyana* (Mal.). *Tjololwane* (Mal. Mpf.). *Yindwa*, *Randjane*, (Kho. Mal.). *Ñwamahlanga* (Mpf.). *Mampfana*, or *Shisibaliyendjo* (I. p. 339).

Gallinacea. *Huku*, domestic hen. *Nkuku* (mu-mi cock. *Hwari* (yin-tin) partridge. *Mhangelane* (yin-tin), Guinea fowl. *Shitjatjatja* (Mpf. Nku.). *Nkungu* (Mpf.). *Matjyatjyana* (Nku.). *Teentana*, *or keenkana* (dji-ma), quail, (Mpf.). *Nkwahla*, (Mpf. Kho.). *Hukumati*, (Mpf. Nku.). *Mangoko* (Mal.). *Makokwe*, or *Makwekwe* (Mpf.). *Hlokoyo* (Mal.). *Shibotshe* (Mal.). *Djyedjyedjye*, (Mal.). *Ndjendjenle* (Mal.). *Ndura*, (Nku.). *Ngukulukwana* (Nku.), or *Shitiwitiwi* (Mpf.). *Nkulunkulu* (Mpf. Kho.) a splendid bird, red, green and blue, called the bird of the chiefs, because chiefs used to adorn themselves with its feathers ; it is the Gallirex porphyreolophus.

Pigeons. *Tuba* (dji-ma), pigeon. *Shibambalana*, or *bombokonyi* (Mpf.) ; same as *Mbabawunyi* (Nku. Mal.). *Gororotwana* (Mpf.) corresponds to *Gugurwana* (Mal. Kho.). *Nyakungufe* (Mpf.) corresponds to *Kopolo*, or *Mangobolo* (Nku. Mal.). *Ngalane* or *Shidjuwapepe* (Mal.).

(1) Abbrev. Mal. = Maluleke ; Kho. = Khosen, Antioka ; Nku. = Nkuna ; Mpf. = Mpfumo ; Bil. = Bilene ; Spel. = Spelonken.

136 Sparrows. *Mbawulwane* (yin-tin), (Mpf.) or *Mbeulwane* (Kho. Nku.) swallow. *Psikidyana* (Spel. Mal.). *Tinhwana* (Mpf. Bil.). *Tinkata* (Kho.). *Nkapa* (mu-mi) (Mpf.). *Nsongwana*, (Mpf.). *Nhlekwana*, *Tshamatisa*, *Shindjengeletana* (Mpf. Nku.). *Nadwangafolen* (mu-ba) (Mpf.). *Ñwamutjalatana* (mu-ba) (Mpf.). *Lidjadjana*, (Spel. Mal.). *Timhatana* (Mpf.). *Tinhelwa* (Mpf.). *Ngodzi* (Spel. Mal.). *Khwezu*, *Kololwana*, etc., *Sowa* (dji-ma), sparrow.

Creepers, *Gongondjwane*, lit. the one who knocks. *Shitjemahangala* (Mal.). *Mumywane* (Mal.). *Ngobo* (Nku). *Hokwe*, *Ndhlazi*, *Nkoro*.

Rapaces. *Gama* (dji-ma) eagle. *Khoti* (dji-ma) vulture. *Shikotana*, *Mangapfi*, *Shimungu*, *Shihununu*, (Mpf.), or *Khukhunu* (Kho. Mal.). *Shikotlwane*, *Hwati*, *Fukwana* (dji-ma). *Manhengana*, etc.

Runners. *Yintjya* (yin-tin), ostrich.

125 Some birds are the objects of superstitious ideas. First, the mythical lightning bird whose story has been told p. 313. Then the Mampfana, the one who stops travellers (I. p. 339), and the Nhlalala. The *Nhlalala* is the honey-bird. It is a little sparrow of a greyish colour. When a traveller crosses the uninhabited country, it calls his attention by emitting short and repeated cries ; it jumps from one branch to another and does not rest until it has induced the traveller to follow it. It then leads him to a hollow stem where bees have gathered honey. The fortunate wayfarer can eat to his heart's content and afterwards gives the bird the wax. If he desires to be shown a second tree, he has only to burn the wax : the nhlalala not having had its full share of the treat will lead him to another stem, hoping for another chance ; there is so much honey in the second spot that you will certainly leave some for your kind guide! Such are some of the stories told by a boy named Pikinini about the honey-bird.

224 *Mammalia*. My information, on this subject, is far from complete. One ought to join a Native hunting party, and hear the hunters tell their mighty deeds round the fire in the evening, if one wishes to acquire all their knowledge and learn all their queer ideas about the beasts of the bush, which they have carefully observed, and regarding which a great number of stories are in circulation (p. 63-76).

circulation (p. 63-76). I shall have to content myself with giving the names of some Mammalia and relating some superstitions concerning them. 136

Edentata : two kinds are known, the *Mpandjana* (yin-tin), the ant-bear, which is covered with hair, and the *Kwara* (dji-ma) which has scales. The only Cetacea known is the *Nkomu* (yin-tin), the whale.

Solipedes : *Mangwa* (yin-tin) means zebra, and this term is sometimes applied to horses ; this latter animal is called *Hanshi* (dji-ma), evidently a corruption of the English word. *Mbongolo* (yin-tin), donkey. *Mula* or *Mewula*, mule.

Pachyderma : *Ngulube* (yin-tin), wild boar and also, by extension, domesticated pig. *Mpfubu* (yin-tin), hippopotamus.

Ruminantia : *Homu* (yin-tin), ox. *Nyari* (yin-tin), buffalo. *Hamba* (yin-tin, Ro.), *Nyimpfu* (yin-tin, Dj.), sheep. *Mbuti* (yin-tin), goat. *Mhalamhala* (yin-tin), sable antelope, Hippotragus niger. *Mhala* (yin-tin) (Zulu impala). *Mhunti* (yin-tin), duiker *Hongonyi* (yin-tin), gnu. *Mangulwe* (mu-ba). *Mhetlwa* (yin-tin), water buck. *Nhlangu* (yin-tin), reed buck. *Mhofu* (yin-tin), eland, *Nhutlwa* (yin-tin), giraffe, etc.

Proboscidea : *Ndlopfu* (yin-tin), elephant.

Rodentia : *Mpfundla* (mu-mi), hare, *Nhlolo* (yin-tin), rabbit. *Khondlo* (dj -ma), mouse. *Vondo* (dj -ma), *Phephe* (dj-ma), *Ngole* (yin-tin), etc.

Insectivora : *Shitlulandlela*, mole, lit. the one which crosses the road ; it is a bad omen for a mole to cross your path. *Tjukumyana*, a brownish mole which digs its burrows just below the surface of the ground. Hence the fact that a bracelet made of its skin is employed as medicine against the Filaria, a parasite which makes its way under the skin! 136 777 825 755

Carnivora : *Nsimba* (yin-tin), civet cat. *Shipakana*, cat. *Mbyana* (yin-tin), dog. *Mhisi* (yin-tin), hyena. *Hlolwa*, *Nhlati* (mu-ba), fox. *Yingwe* (yin-tin), leopard. *Ndjau* (Ro.), *nghala* (Dj.), lion, etc. 136

Chiroptera : *Tangadana* (dji-ma, Ro.), *Mangadyana*, (mu-ba. Dj.), bat.

Primates : *Mfene* (yin-tin), baboon. *Habu* (yin-tin), monkey.

845 daha). Striking is frequently one of the rites of aggregation.
184 (See Van Gennep, *Rites de Passage*, p. 55). Let us remember that the Tembe clan is of Northern origin (I. p. 23) and has retained some customs which are different from those of the other Thongas (1).

2) Heaven and the "Nunu."

136 The following is a very extraordinary custom, and one which,
241 in many respects, greatly resembles those I have already described.
845 There is to be found, on the shores of Delagoa Bay, a small
772 Coleoptera belonging to the Alcides genus of the Cucurlionidæ
826 family. It has a proboscis-shaped mouth, a very hard carapace of half a centimetre in length, brown, and marked on each elytron with two longitudinal white bands. The Blacks call it the *nunu*. It is a scourge to the fields of beans and maize (much as cockchafers are with us). In December or January, when these insects begin to swarm, the chief men of the country order the diviners to throw the bones, and send the women to pick the "nunu" off the bean stalks. They gather them in "sala" shells. Then they choose (probably by casting lots) *a woman who has given birth to twins.*

(1) Amongst *the Hereros* a multiple birth is the happiest event which could possibly occur! The Rev. E. Dannert published in the *Capetown Folklore Journal* an account of the customs practised on such occasions by the Natives of this tribe, which occupies the Western side of Southern Africa, at about the same latitude as the Thongas. The father and mother are condemned to complete silence, under penalty of bringing a curse on those who speak to them. All the members of the tribe are convened and bring their cattle with them. The twins' family has to appear before the whole assembly, and is received with lamentations. Each individual must present himself to the parents, and make them a gift of beads, or other ornaments, in return for which the father and mother purify them by means of a certain powder. After this the father has the right of going from village to village, and claiming an ox from each one, as a kind of ransom. He becomes quite a rich man. This is the *kunga rite*, which we have also met with on many occasions amongst the Thongas (I. p. 124.). How can this diversity between the customs of the Hereros and those of most of the Thongas be explained? No doubt by this vague mysterious idea of Heaven, which is behind the religious conceptions of these tribes and in which all these rites originated. This celestial power, when it manifests itself, stupefies the Natives, for it causes "a death," entails a curse. With the Thongas it is the mother and children who are the objects of this malediction, hence the purifying ceremonies imposed upon them. With the Hereros, it is the whole tribe which is affected. The family into which the twins are born has been distinguished and honoured by this heavenly visitation, and collects for itself the fines which all must pay to regain the celestial favour!